

REMARKS

Applicant's undersigned attorney would like to thank the Examiner for the courteously conducted interview on February 7, 2008. The claim amendments listed above are the claim amendments that the Examiner and Applicant's undersigned attorney agreed to during the interview. Additionally, Applicant's undersigned attorney was informed that the §102(e) rejection based on Aram et al was being removed after the Examiner's analysis. Accordingly, Applicant believes that this application is now in form for allowance.

With regard to Merchant, the only independent claim under rejection was claim 78. As discussed during the interview, the amendments as set forth above clearly distinguish Applicant's device from the prosthesis illustrated in Fig. 4 of Merchant.

With regard to Aubaniac, the independent claims under rejection were claims 14, 50, 78 and 84. As discussed during the interview, the amendments to claims 14, 50 and 78, as set forth above, clearly distinguish Applicant's device from the prosthesis illustrated in Figs 21-24 of Aubaniac. Additionally, as discussed during the interview, claim 84 was previously amended to incorporate the features of claim 99, and the Examiner had previously indicated that the features of claim 99 were patentable over Aubaniac. See Official Action dated May 21, 2007 and Response dated July 17, 2007.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant believes that this application is in form for allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney if the Examiner believes that issues remain that would prevent the Examiner from examining the claims.

Patent Application No. 10/773,684

Respectfully submitted,

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